

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04794 141836Z

50

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SAB-01

INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 FEA-00 IO-10 SCS-03 EB-07

TRSE-00 FRB-03 COME-00 AGR-05 SR-02 ORM-01 MC-02

NSAE-00 SCCT-01 AID-05 CCO-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSC-05 SP-02 OC-05 OPR-02 PA-01 USSS-00 PRS-01 SCA-01

A-01 OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05 FBO-02 AS-01 /120 W

----- 003546

O 141745Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3879

CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CONFIDENTIAL BEIRUT 4794

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS LE PLO

SUBJECT: BEIRUT SITREP - 1500Z

REF: BEIRUT 4749

SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH SITUATION FOR TIME BEING SEEMS QUIETER

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 04794 141836Z

BEIRUT CONTINUES TENSE AND SITUATION REMAINS DANGEROUS.

UNOFFICIAL LEBANESE CHANNELS OF "RECONCILIATION" HAVE SWUNG INTO ACTION IN EFFORT RESOLVE CRISIS. EXPECTED FUNERAL FOR PALESTINIAN "MARTYRS" IN APRIL 13 CLASHES DID NOT RPT NOT TAKE PLACE AT 1000Z ACCORDING LEBANESE ARMY G-2 AND THAT HURDLE REMAINS TO BE FACED. EMISSARIES FROM TWO ARAB CAPITALS REPORTEDLY SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE HERE SHORTLY TO HELP CALM SITUATION. ON OTHER HAND, IN VIEW OF REPORT THAT PHALANGISTS PLAN BRING HEAVY WEAPONS INTO CAPITAL DURING NIGHT, TONIGHT AND TOMORROW MORNING COULD BRING DANGEROUS ESCALATION OF SITUATION. WE CONTINUE TO HAVE NO REPORTS OF AMCITS INJURED AND INCIDENTS THUS FAR HAVE NOT ASSUMED EXPLICIT ANTI-AMERICAN CHARACTER. END SUMMARY.

1. HARD INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS IN BEIRUT AND OTHER PARTS OF COUNTRY CONTINUES TO BE ELUSIVE. NUMBER OF REPORTED CLASHES, AGAIN CENTERING ON PHALANGE INSTALLATIONS, HAVE BEEN RECEIVED DURING DAY. PHALANGE HEADQUARTERS IN CHARLES HELU ST., NEAR MARTYRS SQUARE IN HEART OF CITY, CAME UNDER ATTACK ABOUT 1000Z AND WAS HIT BY THREE RPG ANTI-TANK ROCKETS, BUT THERE NO INDICATION OF CASUALTIES. IN DOWNTOWN AND HAMRA AREA, BANKS AND OTHER BUSINESSES CLOSED EARLY AND EYE-WITNESSES REPORT LARGE CROWDS AT NEIGHBORHOOD FOOD STORES AS RESIDENTS STOCKED UP FOR POSSIBLE SIEGE. SHOOTING WAS REPORTED AT VARIOUS TIMES IN AIN RAMANNEH AND FURN AS SHUBAK/HAZMIEH AREA (MAIN CIRCLE ON DAMASCUS ROAD) AND CORNICHE MAZRA'. TAYOUNE AND SHIAH AREAS WERE REPORTEDLY BLOCKED TO TRAFFIC. USIS DRIVER FROM DAMASCUS ARRIVED AT EMBASSY LATE AFTERNOON AND REPORTED NO DIFFICULTY, EXCEPT ROADBLOCKS (PRESUMABLY ARMY) WHICH WAVED HIM ON AT OUTSKIRTS OF BEIRUT. ROAD TO AIRPORT IS STILL OPEN AS IS AIRPORT ITSELF, BUT ONE OIL COMPANY EXECUTIVE HAS INFORMED EMBOFF THAT AIRPORT COULD RUN OUT OF JET FUEL SOMETIME MORNING APRIL 15 IF RESUPPLY FROM SIDON REFINERY NOT POSSIBLE (WE UNABLE CONFIRM THIS INFO BUT NOTE MOST AIRCRAFT DO NOT RPT NOT REFUEL AT BEIRUT).

2. MAIN SURPRISE OF AFTERNOON WAS APPARENT POSTPONEMENT OF PALESTINIAN FUNERAL EXPECTED AT 1000Z. LEBANESE ARMY G-2, WHO REPORTED FUNERAL WAS NON-EVENT, SAID GOL DOES NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHY IT DID NOT TAKE PLACE. PALESTINIANS APPARENTLY DID PICK UP BODIES OF SLAIN COMPATRIOTS FROM QUARANTINA HOSPITAL (AT LEAST ONE PHALANGIST REPORTED KILLED IN ACCOM-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 04794 141836Z

PANYING FRAY). AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT, HOWEVER, REPORTED HEARING RUMOR AT ABOUT 1200Z THAT FUNERAL MIGHT BE POSTPONED UNTIL APR 15 TO PROVIDE TIME FOR PALESTINIANS AND LEFTIST FORCES TO DO IT UP RIGHT. CONSEQUENTLY, POSTPONEMENT, WHICH BENDS COMMON MUSLIM BURIAL PRACTICE, MIGHT PORTEND EVEN MORE DISRUPTIVE PROCEEDINGS TOMORROW. PROBABLY NO ONE KNOWS EXTENT OF CASUALTIES FROM TODAY'S ALTERCATIONS BUT ONE LOCAL NEWSPAPER SOURCE REPORTS MINIMUM OF SEVEN (WE SUSPECT MORE)

KILLED, WITH FOUR DEATHS OCCURRING IN AIN RAMANNEH AS RESULT OF ANTI-TANK ROCKETS.

3. RADIO LEBANON AT 1000Z REPORTED 14 PERSONS (UNIDENTIFIED BUT PRESUMABLY PHALANGISTS) WERE IN GOL CUSTODY ON CHARGES OF PROVOKING ORIGINAL INCIDENTS ON SUNDAY. PM SOLH HAD REPORT-EDLY GIVEN PHALANGIST LEADER, PIERRE GEMAYEL, UNTIL THIS MORNING TO TURN OVER THOSE GUILTY. WE REMAIN SKEPTICAL THAT EITHER PHALANGE SURRENDERED MEMBERS OR GOL SEIZED THEM, AL-THOUGH IT CANNOT BE EXCLUDED THAT SOME ARMED MEN ON PERIPHERY OF ACTION HAVE BEEN PICKED UP. LIKEWISE, WE DISCOUNT REPORT WE HAVE RECEIVED THAT PALESTINIANS HAVE TURNED OVER TO GOL SEVEN FEDAYEEN IMPLICATED IN SUNDAY'S CLASHES.

4. WE HAVE HEARD PHALANGE MILITIA INTENDS TO BRING MACHINE-GUNS, ROCKETS AND MORTARS INTO BEIRUT TONIGHT TO REINFORCE THEIR POSITIONS. IT IS ALSO RUMORED THAT FORMER PRES CHAMOUN'S "TIGERS" PRESENTLY SETTING UP MMORTARS JUST BELOW BEIT MERI TO PROVIDE PALESTINIANS IN TEL ZAARTAR CAMP, WHO HAVE APPARENTLY SPENT DAY BOMBARDING SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS, WITH DEMONSTRATION IN FIRE POWER.

5. GOL, PROMINENT POLITICAL FIGURES AND POSSIBLY "MODERATE" FEDAYEEN LEADERSHIP HAVE APPARENTLY SWUNG INTO ACTION DURING DAY IN EFFORT TO CONTAIN SITUATION. SAEB ALAM TOLD AMB MORNING APR 14 THAT HE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH IN LAST 24 HOURS WITH PIERRE GEMAYEL AND INDICATED OTHER SIMILAR CONSULTATIONS WERE TAKING PLACE. SALAM, HOWEVER, BLAMING NOT ONLY PHALANGE FOR SITUATION BUT ENTIRE GOVT FOR LACK OF LEADERSHIP. 'ARAFAT HAS ALLEGEDLY RETURNED FROM DAMASCUS AND HELD DISCUSSIONS WITH GOL LEADERS AND IS SCHEDULED TO MEET TONIGHT WITH ARAB AMBS HERE. MOROCCAN AMB TLD AMB TODAY THAT PRES ASSAD OF SYRIA HAD DISPATCHED SPECIAL EMISSARY

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 BEIRUT 04794 141836Z

TO BEIRUT TO TELL SYRIANS, INCLUDING PRESUMABLY SAIQA, TO COOL IT. WE HAVE JUST HEARD REPORT THAT ARAB LEAGUE SYG MAHMUD RIAD BEARING MESSAGE FROM SADAT IS ARRIVING BEIRUT THIS EVENING TO CALM PARTIES TO DISPUTE.

6. FEW ADDITIONAL DETAILS RE EVENTS WHICH SPARKED PRESENT CONFRONTATION ARE AVAILABLE. WE HAVE HEARD TWO OF FOUR PERSONS IN SECOND CAR (REFTEL PARA 2) WHICH ALLEGEDLY FIRED ON PHALANGISTS IN AIN RAMANNEH WERE IN FACT LIBYANS. IN ADDITION, IRAQ-SUPPORTED ARAB LIBERATION FRONT (ALF) HAS NOW ISSUED STATEMENT ASSERTING THAT 18 OF PALESTINIANS KILLED ON BUS WERE ITS MEMBERS. INVOLVEMENT OF SUCH ELEMENTS IF TRUE (AND CONCEIVABLY EVEN IF NOT) MIGHT PRESENT GOL AND "MODERATE" PLO LEADERSHIPS WITH INGREDIENTS, IF BOTH SIDES REALLY DESIRE, FOR "NO WIN, NO LOSS" SOLUTION. THIS REMAINS, HOWEVER,

TO BE SEEN.

7. ALL AMCITS CONTINUE TO BE SAFE SO FAR AS WE AWARE.
THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT UGLY MOOD IN TOWN HAS ASSUMED ANTI-
AMERICAN CHARACTER, ALTHOUGH THIS COULD HAPPEN IF
SITUATION DETERIORATES. AS DEPT AWARE WE ARE ASSOCIATE WITH
THE PHALANGE IN THE EYES OF SOME LEBANESE. WE HAVE
BEEN INFORMING EMBASSY STAFF (NON-ESSENTIAL MEMBERS OF
WHICH DISMISSED AT 1400Z) AND INQUIRING AMCITS TO
STAY HOME. AMERICAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL CLOSED TOMORROW AND
CHILDREN ADVISED TO STAY HOME.

8. ELSEWHERE IN COUNTRY SITUATION REMAINS AS REPORTED
REFTEL. ALL ROADS INTO BEIRUT REMAIN OPEN AT THIS TIME
WITH EXCEPTION OF SIDON ROAD WHICH PROBLEMATIC. AT LEAST
TWO AMCITS PASSED THROUGH SIDON AT ABOUT 0900Z WITHOUT
INCIDENT, BUT MANAGER OF SIDON REFINERY WENT TO SIDON THIS
AFTERNOON BUT HAD TO RETURN AFTER HEARING HEAVY FIRING
AT NORTHERN APPROACH TO TOWN.

9. EMBASSY MAINTAINING NORMAL DUTY SCHEDULE TONIGHT.
THIS WILL BE OUR LAST SITREP UNTIL TOMORROW MORNING
UNLESS SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS REQUIRE REPORT PRIOR
THAT TIME.
GODLEY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, PALESTINIANS, POLITICAL SITUATION, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 APR 1975
Decapton Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT04794
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750129-0965
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750451/aaaabvjl.tel
Line Count: 193
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 BEIRUT 4749
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <21 MAY 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BEIRUT SITREP - 1500Z
TAGS: PINS, LE, PLO
To: STATE DIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006